



News Release

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Employee Health is Good Business

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) today honored 43 Utah companies* for outstanding efforts in promoting wellness at their worksites. Companies who received the Healthy Worksite Award met specific goals, including healthy lifestyle changes in employees, positive changes in the worksite environment and company policies that support healthy lifestyles.

Many of the worksite health programs have a wellness committee, offer on-site healthy food options, and make tobacco cessation and stress management programs available to employees. “Each of these companies deserves a standing ovation for their efforts,” said Lynne Nilson, Program Coordinator, Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion, UDOH. “Implementing a worksite health promotion program shows commitment to employees’ health and well-being.”

Salt Lake City’s ARUP Laboratories exemplifies this kind of commitment. “Upper management support for employee health and wellness is one of the keys to our program’s success,” said Rebecca Fietkau, Wellness Director, ARUP. “The commitment to wellness here starts at the top.” ARUP CEO Dr. Carl Kjeldsberg, for example, walks with his employees every Thursday at noon. He also presents a monthly award (valued at \$300) to recognize employees who have made impressive health behavior changes.

As further proof of the company’s dedication to fitness, ARUP recently remodeled a 2,800 square foot space for a new onsite Wellness Center. Employees and their spouses have 24-hour access to exercise equipment and locker rooms. They can also take advantage of 15-minute and 60-minute group exercise classes, fitness assessments, and

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one-on-one health behavior change consultations to help them meet their personal health and fitness goals. During 2004, staff members gave nearly 500 one-on-one personal consultations to employees, and the new center currently receives approximately 1,500 visits each week.

The wellness staff also regularly offer incentive programs, seminars and activities to help promote healthy lifestyles. For instance, employees wanting to lose weight or quit smoking were recently offered a \$50 incentive to reward them for their success. Thirty-five Weight Watchers at Work members collectively lost 610 pounds after 16 weeks and several smokers completely quit smoking after the Great America Smoke Out.

The Utah Transit Authority (UTA) is a Gold Plus winner that has encouraged a wellness program since 1987 and has over 900 employees participating in one or more extensive health promotion programs. In 2004, UTA created health reimbursement accounts so employees can earn money to be deposited in those accounts by participating in healthy behaviors and programs.

“The Gold Plus level is what we hope all companies strive for,” said Nilson. “Companies that start a comprehensive, long-term health promotion program will see changes in health care costs, productivity, and the overall health of their employees.” Criteria for the Gold Plus level include documenting positive outcomes, such as healthy behavior changes (e.g., losing weight, increasing physical activity) and environmental change (e.g., healthy choices in vending machines, walking paths), policy development (e.g., work time release for exercise), a wellness committee, a mission statement on employee health and wellness, and a health promotion program budget.

The Healthy Worksite Award is a part of the A Healthier You Legacy Project, which also sponsors awards programs for schools, communities and college campuses. For more information, contact Lynne Nilson at (801) 538-6256 or visit www.health.utah.gov/worksitewellness.

***2004 Healthy Worksite Award Recipients**

Gold Plus

American Express
BD Medical
BYU Wellness Program
Davis County
Fairchild Semiconductor
Healthy Utah
Honeywell
ICON Health & Fitness
Intermountain Health Care
Intermountain Power Service
Corporation
Novell
Nu Skin Enterprises
Pepperidge Farm Inc.
Provo City
Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah
Salt Lake County
Schreiber Foods Inc
Ultradent Products, Inc
Utah Transit Authority

Gold

ARUP Laboratories
Convergys Corporation
Delta Air Lines
Northrop Grumman Mission Systems

(Gold continued)

Southwest Utah Public Health
Department
Summit County
University of Utah
USANA Health Sciences
Utah County
Verizon Wireless

Silver

Children's Miracle Network
Cream O' Weber
Deseret Mutual Benefit Administrators
Envirocare
Ken Garff
Murray City Corporation
Owners Resort Exchange
Salt Lake CAP Head Start
Salt Lake Valley Emergency
Communications Center
Utah Valley State College
Westech, Inc
Workforce Solutions

Bronze

Lifetime Products, Inc.
Stampin' Up!

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.